

and we attack them, and we put a lot of their loved ones out of work. And they were convinced that we would take their oil. But it's been 5 years, and they've come to realize that there is a country so good that it would spend nearly a half a trillion dollars, have more than 20,000 of its American forces wounded, some very severely, have 4,000 of its troops killed and not take a drop of its oil, not a drop of its oil. We're beginning to gain credibility that we actually meant what we said and that there is a country so good in the world that it would do that for something far more important.

We want a world of peace. We want a world where people can live their lives as they want to. We want a world where commerce can flow back and forth freely. And we're willing to give a lot and spend a lot to do that.

Now, I want to say something to my colleagues that may not believe we should ever have been in Iraq. I fear that there are some in this Chamber who fear that if we ultimately win in Iraq, and by winning, I mean restore a security force of Iraqis that can fend for themselves and where they can govern for themselves and where there is a significant movement towards a more democratic form of government, and a government that, unlike its neighbors, allows its women to be educated, allows its women to be part of commerce, if we do that, it justifies the war.

We may say at the end, we spent a trillion dollars, we lost 4,000 to 5,000 men and women, and we have this result which is pretty spectacular, but in the end, it may not justify what we have done. But where we all should be united, it seems to me, is that we leave Iraq in a place that the void is not filled up by the Iraqis.

Now, we haven't taken a drop of their oil, but one thing is very clear, Iraq has a lot of oil and gas. In fact, Bunker Hunt came to my office, rolled out a map that would cover this desk, and he said, I believe Iraq has more energy than exists in Saudi Arabia. The world says it has 10 percent. He told, I believe it may have as much as 20 percent of the world's reserves. And then he showed me this map with markings throughout Iraq indicated a real potential for either gas or oil. He said, to an oil man, this is a candy store of opportunity. Well, it belongs to the Iraqis. And my hope and prayer is that they will someday be able to enjoy it and share it with the rest of the world.

And the thing that's stunning is, it's not just in Sunni areas, it's not just in Shi'a areas and it's not just in Kurdish areas, it's throughout Iraq. This is a nation that doesn't believe in shari'a law. It's a nation that is very secular. It's a nation where Sunni and Shi'as have, in particular, gotten along with each other. It's a nation that has so much oil as a resource, and gas, but almost as importantly, it has so much water. When I fly over it, you see these magnificent rivers, not just the Tigris and Euphrates, but the others that join

it, but all the canals and the irrigation that exists. This is a country that will be able to export and feed parts of the world.

This is a country that will educate both its men and women. This is a country that has significant resources. This is a country we hope to be friends with for a long, long time. And this is a country that deserves some patience from Americans. We need to understand that they didn't have the head start we had in the United States. And even then, think about it, we knew democracy before we became these United States. We had democracy in our colonies.

We had the Declaration of Independence in 1776. And it took us 13 years to have the Constitution of the United States, 13 years. And even then, as perfect as we would like to think our Constitution is, but in our Constitution as Condoleezza Rice points out, she was three-fifths a person, and a slave. So, we certainly didn't get it all right.

I'll conclude by saying, we've seen the most progress on the part of the military. We've seen not the kind of progress we want to see from the politicians. But even then, we need to give them credit. They have voted out retirement for ba'athists, Saddamists. That was hugely important. While they don't have an oil law that formally distributes the oil to the different regions of Iraq, they are doing it in spite of that without the formal agreement.

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They have a de-Baathification law that's coming into place so that they're hiring people that, in the past were told they couldn't be part of this new Iraqi government.

And they're going to have provincial elections. The significance of that is the local elections were the first of the three elections, and Sunnis didn't participate, so we have some Shi'as who run Sunni areas. This means that these leaders are willing, and know that they have to give up power to the predominant group within their regime of Iraq.

No one knows how history is going to judge our involvement in Iraq. But the one thing I do know is that we finally have the kind of leadership in Iraq that I've been hungry for, some real honest talk from Mr. Petraeus. He'll tell you what's going right and what's going wrong. We've had, I think, good military leaders, but I think he's learned a lot, and I think he's clearly the best.

We needed to make a change with Secretary of Defense, and since then I've seen significant progress. It took Abraham Lincoln 9 generals before he got the generals that finally started to win some battles, Sherman and Grant.

We're starting to see a difference in Iraq because of this leadership. We're even starting to see Mr. Maliki show some guts by confronting his own political base, Shi'as, in Basra.

They haven't been given the opportunity that we had of having 13 years before a true government was estab-

lished under our Constitution. They've had five.

We have American time. We want them to act more quickly. But, at the same time, in terms of Middle East culture, they're moving a lot faster than some people give them credit.

Madam Speaker, I really appreciate your willingness to allow me this opportunity, and I want to just repeat that everyone in this chamber loves our troops. I'm addicted when I go back to Iraq, to meet with the men and women who serve, those who are content we're there, those who would go back and again and again, and some who wish they weren't there. But every one of our troops are real patriots. I can't tell you what an honor it is to interact with them. And with that, Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. Con. Res. 71. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to Michael Ellis DeBakey, M.D., the Committee on House Administration.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HARE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. DUNCAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, April 8.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, April 2.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, April 8.

Mrs. BIGGERT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TANCREDO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.